

# NUTRITION

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## Healthy Children, Healthy Choices

As a parent, it is your responsibility to buy healthy groceries and serve nutritious food to your growing children. Start by establishing a routine, even if it is difficult at first. This means a set time for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Once you have a routine for meals and snacks, mealtimes will be more relaxed. Most children are happier on a schedule and become hungry at regular times. You'll feel better about parenting when the family has a routine.

### **Nutrition Tips for Parents:**

- Be consistent! Children need a meal routine just like they need a bedtime routine. Plan for three meals and two snacks each day! Serve a vegetable or fruit at every meal. Fruits and vegetables are great for snacking too.
- Instead of rewarding your child with food, reward them with attention (hugs, kisses, and smiles) and playful activities.
- Avoid arguments about high-fat, high-sugar foods by keeping them out of the house. Leave the candy, soft drinks, chips, and cookies at the store.
- Serve water when your child is thirsty. Water is healthy and inexpensive.

### **Portion Size for Young Children 2–6 Years Old:**

Serve child-sized portions, and let your child ask for more. Here are some examples of child-sized portions:

- 1/3 to 1/2 cup of frozen veggies
- 1 or 2 small cooked broccoli spears
- 1/2 cup of tomato sauce
- 5 to 7 cooked baby carrots
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup of melon
- 5 to 7 strawberries
- 1/2 cup of apple sauce
- 1 small tangerine
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup of frozen or fresh berries
- 1 cup (8 fl. oz.) low-fat yogurt or nonfat milk
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup of macaroni-and-cheese, rice, pasta, or mashed potatoes
- 2oz. hamburger
- 1/4 cup ground meat such as turkey or pork, browned and drained
- 1 or 2 drumsticks

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

